

Connecticut Siting Council

10 Franklin Square

New Britain, CT

January 27, 2015

Dear Executive Director Bachman and Members of the CSC,

My family members came to New England in the 1600s. This would not be insignificant were it not for the fact that after so many generations of living here that we would consider moving elsewhere because of a power plant!

Please note that my relatives settled in Naugatuck to utilize CLEAN ENERGY produced by the Naugatuck River! Its water power aided in the manufacture of farm implements for a company, the Eastern Company, that thrives today

Because of my extended family's long term presence in this area as farmers, manufacturers, doctors and lawyers who have always been committed to caring for the land around us, we feel it is a betrayal by a neighbor who is prepared to despoil our area by adding HEAVY industry which will contaminate our air, water, soil, compromise our safety and reduce our real estate values.

We grow hay on about 50 acres and profit share corn for chicken feed on another 55 acres. We also manage our timber, meaning we thin and bring it to market at varying intervals. We pasture boarded horses belonging to others, raise a few beef cattle, miniature horses and donkeys on the property.

We support the Middlebury Bridle Land Association which maintains trails and holds popular spring and fall horseback riding events that often raise money for charity. The horseback riders frequent the Larkin State Bridle Trail, the 14+ mile right of way of the old trolley track which was purchased by my grandfather then donated to the state as a bridle trail in the early 1940s. The footing is good, the cinders drain it dry, it is flat and two horses can breeze side by side.

We protect and "raise" wildlife by providing undisturbed open space within which wild creatures can thrive. We have a great variety of wildlife some of which are rare. We have endangered box turtles and red shouldered hawks living and nesting on Towantic Pond. We have a bald eagle who has nested, raising one baby, whom she threw out of the nest, forcing him/her, to learn to fly living next to Longmeadow Pond. We have hares and yes, mountain lion and more. We are awaiting the response of wildlife expert to testify.

We bring in about 4,500 bales of hay a season to sale to mostly Connecticut's horse owners (a major economic driver in Connecticut) including owners whose horses we board. The corn is harvested by another farmer who sells it by the ton to the robust Connecticut chicken farming businesses near the casinos and feeds it to his own dairy herd nearby. His yield is 4 tons to the acre on approximately 55 acres for a total of 220 tons.

We are also in the real estate business. We have 14 rentals and will have a prime lot for sale soon with a 3 lot subdivision to follow. Other acreage will likely be sold over time, possibly generations for residential use.

As you can see, our businesses depend on the land. More accurately, our businesses depend on the land, the air, the water and the built environment. We couldn't grow or rent anything without these essentials.

With a power plant proposal looming with a presence of 20 years+ of operation, one feels impending doom. The essentials listed above will be compromised physically, perceptually and therefore monetarily in lower real estate values.

It is disheartening to say the least to have preserved land over generations to find out one should have sold it long ago not imagining that something as devastating as a power plant, where there is no need for one, could jump into a fairly pristine area for no reason other than the crossing of a power line and a gas line. Whose power is to serve New Hampshire and Boston. This makes no sense. New Hampshire and Boston are each over 100 miles away.

I have always heard there is a great deal of energy lost as electricity travels over long distances, even in matters of feet. Does it not make more sense to place this plant or plants where it is needed.

It is also disheartening to have the Siting Council allow an applicant a total of (3) five year increments (from 1999 until now) within which to build this plant. And again, this applicant, which is a different applicant, a change, wants to delay its building of the plant until 2019. If there is a delay until then, that's another 5 years. Shouldn't there be another hearing for changed conditions in 2019. Technically and environmentally and more things will change.

This applicant proposes a different plant, an even bigger and supposedly better plant. In 2019, the technology will change again. Including the possibility of a truly GREEN and environmentally, truly CLEAN, alternative. Please do not allow this applicant to delay. Better yet, since there is no intention to supply power to locally us or to anyone in Connecticut, and since a plant at this site does not have the ability to send power to power needy Stamford-Norwalk in Connecticut, it is unnecessary. It's a burden on Connecticut in every way and particularly to us locally.

The air:

"Natural gas power plants are significant air pollution sources, releasing hazardous air pollutants, global warming pollution and fine particulate matter." (Energy Justice.net/natural gas) Further, "Pipelines and compressor stations endangering bodies of water and common methane release along the pipeline are 100 times worse than CO2 for global warming, however, the EPA regulates based on 20 times worse than CO2 on a 20 year basis rather than going by NASA's 2009 research saying natural gas is 105 times worse than CO2 emissions over 20 years. The UN study came up with methane releases being 86 times as bad as CO2 for global warming. [www. UCSUSA.org]

Released NOX causes ground level ozone which can burn lung tissue, SOX contributes to acid rain and formation of particulate matter, PM10, PM2.5 [www.UCSUSA.org].

The EPA says air emissions can lead to smog, acid rain, and haze. "Although most sources say emission rates are less than coal and burning oil, the average is 1135 lbs/MWh of carbon dioxide and 0.1

lbs/MWh of sulphur dioxide and 1.7 lbs/MWh of sulphur dioxide these plants are obviously still polluting.” [EPA.gov/cleanenergy]

Methane, a primary component (80-95%) of natural gas and a greenhouse gas, can also be emitted into the air when natural gas is not burned completely, similarly, methane can be emitted as a result of leaks and losses during transportation. Methane is a greenhouse gas. It contributes to global warming more than CO2.

The quality of the air is another reason why our property values will decrease.

Health problems:

The emissions from this power plant can compromise citizens’ health.

Power plant emissions are directly related to health problems. PM10 and particularly PM2.5 can cause autism, COPD, asthma, heart attacks and premature death. [Harvard School of Public Health study of autism, December 19, 2014]

From “Evidence Growing of air pollution’s link to heart disease, death. American Heart Association Scientific Statement, May 10, 2010.

“Exposure to fine particulate matter

[<http://m.newsroom.heart.org/news/1029>]

Middlebury is a rural town. Most people in town are outdoors as often as possible. We have a walking/jogging trail through the center of town that is in constant use, as well as multiple public parks.

It is possible power plant emissions might discourage outdoor exercise.

The damaging emissions might lead people to move elsewhere and prevent new people from choosing to live here.

This is another reason why our property values will decline.

Soil:

The EPA list of “possible land resource impacts include “....loss of soil productivity...” Soil can become just plain dirt.”! [www.EPA.Home.LandResourceUse]

This has direct effect on farming of any kind. The quality and quantity of farm land and the resulting decline in quality and quantity of all crops will culminate in the decline of all of our property values.

Water use:

Although natural gas turbines utilize less water. “When power plants remove water from a lake or a river, fish and other aquatic life can be killed, effecting animals and people who depend on these resources.” [www.epa.gov/cleanenergy/energy_and_yoy/affect/naturalgas.html]

We use wells for our properties and farm animals. Very deep wells that are over 300 feet deep reaching to the Longmeadow Pond aquifer. We cannot have our water quality compromised. Stephen Danzer wetlands expert, will address this as well.

Safety:

Natural gas is known to be dangerous. It is dangerous to transport. It is transported under pressure. There have been numerous tragic, that is to say, deadly accidents.

In 2010, in San Bruno, California, 2 miles west of the San Francisco International Airport, near Skyline Boulevard, a PG&E 30" in diameter pipeline weld gave way and caused an explosion equivalent to a magnitude 1.1 earthquake as determined by US Geological Survey. The blast sent up a "wall of fire 1,000' high", killing 8 people, injuring 58 people and destroying 45 homes. For which PG&E was fined \$1.4 billion, in 2014, for pipe line safety violations. The emergency response was inadequate. It took an hour for officials to understand what had happened. Federal investigators said PG&E failed to shut off its natural gas lines for 95 minutes after the blast fueling the fire. [USA Today, Sept. 4, 2014]) After the Fact, PG&E reduced the pressure in its lines by 20%.

[http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/2010_San_Bruno_pipeline_explosion]

Likewise, on November 6, 2011, PG&E had another pipeline explosion near Woodside California while performing strength testing. It caused a landslide but no casualties or reported damage. Another pipeline explosion occurred that destroyed a wooden home. [ibid]

Similarly, in Middletown, CT, in 2010, a natural gas explosion killed 6 employees at the Kleen Energy Center. [Wikipedia, Kleen Energy Explosion, Middletown, CT]

In 2014, Kleen Energy Center, Middletown, CT had another emergency. This time there was a fire in one of its turbines to which 50 firefighters responded from New Haven, Portland and surrounding areas which "was a challenge getting it extinguished".

[http://wtnh.com/2014/02/12/fire_reported_at_clean_energy].

"The explosion measured magnitude 5.0 on the Richter Scale according to the USGS.org website and was felt as far away as New York." [www.nhregister.com//general-news/20130207/3-years-later-many-still-reluctant-to-talk-about-deadly-kleen-energy-blast-in-middletown]

The Algonquin compressed gas line passes westward through one of our properties on its way to the plant site. We have received notification that the line will be expanded from 24" in diameter to 42" in diameter.

That is a major difference from 1999. With that change much more fuel will explode and conflagrate when something goes wrong. It could be more explosive than Kleen Energy's explosion. The Waterbury-Oxford airport and aircraft could be damaged or destroyed. Our built environment could be impacted. Certainly any land within its blast zone and fire zone would be effected.

Airport:

Safety at the airport is of major concern. A plane thrown by the turbulence of the high velocity gases from the (2) 150' stacks could end up crashing on our property, into a house, or into the proposed natural gas power plant or the Spectra Energy gas compressor station causing a colossal explosion (see above). Imagine having a gas pipeline, next to a gas compressor station, next to a gas fired power plant with 48 hours of stored oil and ammonia on site. If one site has a fire/explosion the other will, too. This shows a lack of forethought and wisdom.

Emergency response:

Firefighters from the local volunteer fire departments do not have the capability or manpower to address such a catastrophe. The pipeline would continue to fuel the fire until turned off. That could take a while. It took PG&E 95 minutes to turn off the gas feeding the fire and explosion in San Bruno. This worrisome.

Noise:

This plant, 800MW will be far noisier than the previously approved (with conditions) 512MW power plant. Perched high on a hill, on a cleared lot, sounding like jet engines. These are turbines, as in airplane turbines, but monstrous in size and output. Most all of Middlebury hears the jets in the sky and at the airport. This will be the same but constant. A real nuisance and deafening for those closer by.

Another negative for real estate values.

Wastewater and sludge:

Where does the sludge from the scrubbers go? Exactly where does it end up?

I fear for the neighboring properties, for anything downstream, Longmeadow Pond, Towantic Pond and the surrounding wetlands, the homes, well water, wildlife, the plants and forests. Stephen Danzer, a wetlands expert, will address this.

Real estate values:

The proposed power plant will have a visual impact on many homes in Middlebury, Oxford, Woodbury, Southbury and beyond. The plant site is on one of the highest hills around. The view from the site, as seen by many of us including members of the Siting Council several Thursdays ago, is spectacular. One can see as far as the eye can see. Once more trees are cut, more land cleared the view will be close to 360 degrees. Thousands will see this plant. Reverse that. Imagine what the view will be like looking back. Thousands will see this plant. This will definitely negatively effect real estate values. Were it not for constant aircraft passing over head, it would be a terrific condominium site. But better, perhaps, for a corporate headquarters with a commanding view and place to keep its jet(s).

In 2008, UC Berkeley did a study on the impact of power plants on real estate values noting that power plant siting has become "increasingly contentious, in part because power plants are a source of numerous negative local externalities including elevated levels of air pollution, haze, noise, and traffic." Housing and rental values decreased by 3-5% between 1990 and 2000 in neighborhoods near sites. It

reported that there was a willingness to pay to avoid power plants of any type, big, small, peaker or baseload, including whether a home was upwind or downwind was also a factor. [The Effect of Power Plants on Local Housing Values and Rents, faculty.haas.berkeley.edu/ldavis/cv.pdf]

“Pick a home in close proximity to a dump or a power plant and watch your property value get dinged.

University of California at Berkeley found homes within two miles of a power plant saw values drop 4-7%.” ..[www.businessinsider.com/whathurts-hurts-home-value-2013-5#city-dumps-and-power-plants-can-drag-down-your-home-value-by-about-7-2..]

“Homeowners in Mayflower Arkansas were terrified their property value would tank after a burst gas pipeline flooded their lawns with oil earlier this year. Their fears are justified. A team of Duke University economists and nonprofit research organization Resources for the Future found Pennsylvania homeowners who use local groundwater for drinking lost up to 24% of their property value if they lived within 1.25 miles of a shale gas well. And that’s even without solid evidence that fracking really poses a threat to drinking water-public perception alone is enough to drive down home values.”

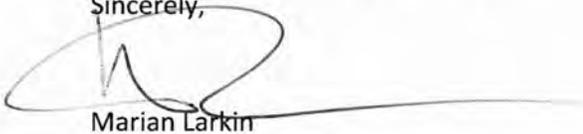
[www.businessinsider.com/whathurts-home-value-2013#city-dumps-and-power-plants-can-drag-down-your-home-value-by-about-]

Having cited the above, we own a significant amount of land in Oxford and Middlebury only 4,000’ and more from the plant site, along the eastern shore of Longmeadow Pond and continuing east along the State Bridle Trail. We plan on a large senior housing project on some of this land. Will anyone want to live or near there given the above? Will they be too frightened to live there?

Therefore for all of the above reasons and more we stand firmly against this application.

We more than strongly urge you, as an extremely powerful body and as representatives of the people of Connecticut, side with the people because the benefits of a power plant at this site in no way outweigh its negative impacts.

Sincerely,



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PS I await various experts’ replies on testifying. Not only is the time frame allotted too tight but also GE or CPV has already hired some of the experts I have contacted.

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